

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 SY-05 /052 W
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R 091510Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 778
INFO AMCONSUL MUNICH
USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 11491

MUNICH PLEASE PASS LT.COL. ROLAND LAJOIE AT RUSSIAN INSTITUTE
GARMISCH
MBFR VIENNA FOR PRESEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UR, US, PINT, PDIP, ASEC
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTRY PRESENTS NEW CHARGES AGAINST PRESEL

SUMMARY: ACTING CHIEF OF MFA USA DIVISION BILATERAL SECTION,
YU. S. KAPRALOV, CALLED IN EMBOFF AUGUST 8 ON WHAT HE
DESCRIBED AS "AN UNPLEASANT MATTER." KAPRALOV READ A LETTER
FROM SOVIET CITIZEN BY THE NAME OF SIMON RAKMINEVICH KEGELMAN
WHICH ACCUSED FORMER EMBOFF JOSEPH PRESEL OF ATTEMPTING TO
GET LISTS OF EMPLOYEES OF INSTITUTES WHERE "SECRET WORK"
WAS BEING CONDUCTED. KAPRALOV CALLED THE ACCUSATIONS
"SERIOUS" BUT REFUSED TO BACK THEM UP AND CLOSED ONLY BY
"CALLING THE ATTENTION OF THE EMBASSY TO THIS STATEMENT."
END SUMMARY.

1. KAPRALOV BEGAN THE MEETING BY TELLING EMBOFF THAT
HE HAD A MESSAGE TO READ BUT THAT HE COULD NOT SHOW IT
TO EMBOFF OR SUPPLY HIM WITH A COPY. HE THEN READ
FROM WHAT APPEARED TO BE A XEROX COPY OF A HAND-WRITTEN
LETTER. THE ESSENTIAL POINTS IN THE LETTER WERE AS
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FOLLOWS:

-- KEGELMAN READ THE ARTICLES IN IZVESTIYA IN
MARCH AND JUNE IN WHICH MR. PRESEL WAS NAMED AND
THESE PROMPTED HIM TO WRITE THIS LETTER.
-- KEGELMAN CLAIMED THAT HE WAS A GUIDE AND INTERPRETER
FOR INTOURIST IN KISHINEV, MOLDAVIA WHEN HE
FIRST MET AN AMERICAN MILITARY ATTACHE NAMED "LADKOY"

(KAPRALOV HAD NO OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE MILITARY ATTACHE AND EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT KEGELMAN MAY HAVE BEEN REFERRING TO LT. COLONEL ROLAND LAJOIE WHO SERVED IN MOSCOW DURING THE PERIOD MENTIONED BY KEGELMAN). HE MET "LADKOY" SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE PERIOD 1974 THROUGH 1976.

-- "LADKOY" ASKED KEGELMAN FOR BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT HIMSELF AND HIS FRIENDS, AS WELL AS HIS "POLITICAL VIEWS," AND SUGGESTED THAT SINCE KEGELMAN HAD EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN GOING TO ISRAEL, HE SHOULD CONTACT AMERICAN EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY JOSEPH PRESEL WHO "LADKOY" SAID WAS INTERESTED IN THESE MATTERS.

-- IN MAY 1976 KEGELMAN CAME TO MOSCOW ON INTOURIST BUSINESS AND CONTACTED "LADKOY," WHO PUT HIM IN TOUCH WITH PRESEL.

-- IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH PRESEL AT THE LATTER'S APARTMENT ON DONSKAYA ULITSA, KEGELMAN TOLD PRESEL ABOUT HIS WISH TO EMIGRATE AND INFORMED HIM ABOUT OTHERS WHOM HE KNEW WISHED TO LEAVE FOR ISRAEL.

-- PRESEL ASKED FOR HIS REASONS FOR WISHING TO LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION AND REQUESTED A LIST OF NAMES OF OTHERS.

-- PRESEL ALSO ALLEGEDLY ASKED KEGELMAN TO OBTAIN A LIST OF INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE DOING "SECRET WORK" IN INSITUATES. HE IMPRESSED ON KEGELMAN THE NEED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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BE CAREFUL IN FORMULATING THIS LIST AND SUGGESTED THAT KEGELMAN HAVE SOMEONE BRING THE LIST FROM KISHINEV TO MOSCOW AND GIVE IT TO PRESEL. PRESEL SUPPOSEDLY PROMISED TO SEND BACK "A GIFT" TO KEGELMAN IN RETURN FOR THE LIST.

-- DURING THE CONVERSATION, PRESEL CONSTANTLY REFERRED TO THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST JEWS AND ANTI-SEMITIC ACTIVITIES WHICH GO ON IN THE SOVIET UNION AND ASKED KEGELMAN TO SUPPLY HIM WITH INFORMATION REGARDING THESE ACTIVITIES ABOUT WHICH KEGELMAN OR OTHERS HE KNEW HAD KNOWLEDGE OF.

-- KEGELMAN IN HIS LETTER SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THESE ACTIVITIES OF PRESEL "HAVE NOTHING TO DO" WITH HIS STATUS AS A DIPLOMAT AND THAT THEY CONSTITUTED AN INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION. HE STRONGLY PROTESTED PRESEL'S ACTIVITIES IN HIS CONCLUDING SENTENCE.

2. AFTER READING THE LETTER, KAPRALOV TOLD EMBOFF THAT THESE WERE "SERIOUS ACCUSATIONS" AND THAT THE MFA WISHED TO "CALL THE ATTENTION OF THE EMBASSY TO THIS STATEMENT." EMBOFF ASKED IF KAPRALOV HAD ANY

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR THE RESULTS OF ANY INVESTIGATION WHICH WOULD SUBSTANTIATE THE CHARGES IN THE LETTER. KAPRALOV SAID HE HAD NO INFORMATION OTHER THAN THAT CONTAINED IN THE LETTER. EMBOFF ASKED IF, THEREFORE, THE MFA WAS SUPPORTING THE CHARGES MADE IN THE LETTER. KAPRALOV AVOIDED A DIRECT ANSWER AND SIMPLY REPEATED HIS REMARK ABOUT THE "SERIOUS ACCUSATIONS" AND THE DESIRE OF THE MINISTRY TO CALL THE EMBASSY'S ATTENTION TO THE STATEMENT.

3. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT THE EMBASSY UNEQUIVOCALLY REJECTS ANY CHARGES OF IMPROPER ACTIVITY ON THE PART OF MR. PRESEL AND COULD NOT ACCEPT THE ACCUSATIONS IN THE KEGELMAN LETTER AS TRUE. KAPRALOV TOOK CONFIDENTIAL

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NOTE OF THIS AND THE MEETING MOVED ON TO ANOTHER SUBJECT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 11491

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4. COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR FROM KAPRALOV'S UNINSPIRED

ATTITUDE THAT HE WAS MAKING THE PRESENTATION FOR THE RECORD. HE PROFESSED COMPLETE IGNORANCE OF ANY FACTS OF THE CASE APART FROM THE LETTER AND, IN RESPONDING TO EMBOFF'S QUESTIONS AND STATEMENT FOLLOWING THE READING, BETRAYED A DESIRE TO MOVE ON TO THE NEXT ISSUE HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO RAISE. THIS HAD TO DO WITH AMERICAN TOURISTS SMUGGLING MONEY INTO THE USSR (SEPTTEL), AND HE WAS MUCH MORE ANIMATED AND INDIGNANT ON THIS POINT THAN IN DISCUSSING THE PRESEL CASE.

5. WE NOTE THAT THE CHARGE IN THE KEGELMAN LETTER IS SIMILAR TO THAT WHICH LA TIMES CORRESPONDENT ROBERT TOTH FACED IN HIS INTERROGATION BY THE KGB BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE IN JUNE. IN THE TOTH CASE, IT WAS SHCHARANSKIY WHO ALLEGEDLY PASSED INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYEES OF SOVIET INSTITUTES CONFIDENTIAL

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ENGAGED IN "SECRET" PROJECTS. NO REFERENCE OF ANY KIND WAS MADE TO SHCHARANSKIY OR ANY OTHER DISSIDENTS BY KEGELMAN OR KAPRALOV. IN THE TOTH CASE, A TASS ITEM ACCUSING HIM OF IMPROPER ACTIVITIES APPEARED SHORTLY AFTER HIS DEPARTURE. WE WILL, OF COURSE, BE WATCHING CLOSELY TO SEE IF THIS PATTERN IS FOLLOWED WITH REGARD TO PRESEL.

6. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY LIGHT EITHER PRESEL OR COL. LAJOIE CAN SHED ON THIS MATTER. TOON

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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TAGS: PINT, PDIP, ASEC, UR, US, (PRESEL, JOSEPH)
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